



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2014
Core Skills: Numeracy (WA)**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

SVQ awards

Numeracy SCQF level 3 F429 04
Numeracy SCQF level 4 F42A 04
Numeracy SCQF level 5 F42B 04
Numeracy SCQF level 6 F42C 04

General comments

The External Verifier reports, of which there were 25 from four External Verifiers, clearly indicate that all centres have a sound understanding of the national standards.

Of the 25 centres visited, 24 had significant strengths and one had some strengths and some weaknesses.

All centres had an induction policy, including specific induction for assessors and internal verifiers. The roles and responsibilities for new assessors and verifiers were clearly stated as were the requirements of the national standards. In many cases the evidence was stored electronically.

Centres were well prepared and had effective quality systems that supported the assessors and internal verifiers of the awards. In a number of cases, the policies and procedures were available electronically.

Evidence from reports suggested that all assessors are familiar with the range of documentation and are fully supported by effective internal verification processes. Most assessors and internal verifiers had the appropriate training qualifications, while a small number were working towards them.

New assessors went through a robust induction process to ensure they were competent to carry out their role. The internal verifiers were closely involved in the induction and training of new assessors.

All centres have quality assurance systems to ensure standards are maintained. This was generally co-ordinated by an SQA contact with responsibility for the dissemination of information from SQA, staff induction and training in SQA procedures, CPD activities, co-ordination of internal and external verification and auditing of SQA processes.

In most cases master files are available containing comprehensive information relating to the systems and procedures for the delivery and quality assurance of the award.

There was clear evidence that assessors and candidates were involved in planning and reviewing assessments. The candidates maintained a portfolio and identified tasks and activities which could be used to produce evidence. The

assessor would then provide assessments that filled the gaps in this naturally occurring evidence.

CPD records were maintained for all assessors and verifiers and personal development planning was regularly reviewed in most centres.

Documentation was presented in a clear and concise form that assisted the verification process.

Unit specification, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

It was apparent from the external verification reports that assessors and internal verifiers were familiar with the Unit specifications and assessment support packs.

The assessment support packs were often used to provide information on the delivery of the Units and to provide guidance on assessment and Evidence Requirements. The assessments were checked against the Knowledge and Understanding and Performance and Behaviour standards.

Regular standardisation meetings, generally monthly, were held to look at assessment materials and to discuss the quantity and level required.

Most centres produced student portfolios of evidence that were cross-referenced with the assessment checklist.

Candidates were supported by the assessors in identifying sources of evidence for the assessments.

Candidates were judged consistently and accurately against the requirements for the award and there were regular reviews and dialogue with the assessors.

Evidence Requirements

Assessors discussed the evidence required for the Unit with candidates. Candidates were often encouraged to take ownership of the Unit and to identify naturally occurring evidence from their workplace. All centres were aware of the value of gathering naturally occurring evidence in terms of integrating assessments and making the assessment relevant.

Where no naturally generated evidence was available, examples from the assessment support packs were used as models to develop contextualised tasks at the appropriate level.

Most centres made effective use of checklists to ensure that the source of evidence could be clearly identified. Regular internal verification checks ensured that the level and amount of evidence was appropriate. Most centres internally verified at least 20% of student evidence, but this increased to 100% for new assessors.

Standardisation meetings were held on a regular basis, both as valuable CPD for new staff, and to ensure that issues such as the level and the amount of evidence required could be fully reviewed.

Administration of assessments

Centres made full use of the information provided in the Unit specification and assessment support packs to ensure that assessments were at the appropriate level.

Learner induction and ongoing discussions with assessors identified the assessment procedures. Learners were encouraged to identify naturally occurring sources of evidence and opportunities to integrate assessment. Most centres used checklists to identify evidence sources.

Most centres make use of portfolios to plan and review progress. Where evidence was produced in the workplace without the assessor being present, witness testimony was used to verify the assessment. Where no evidence was identified from the vocational area, centres generally used contextualised assessments based on the ASP guidelines.

Where written exercises were utilised, formal assessment procedures were followed and results entered in the learner's portfolio.

Methods of assessment were valid, reliable and practical.

Internal verification procedures were reviewed on a regular basis, usually at least annually. Comments from internal verifiers were helpful and supportive. Procedures were robust and effective.

All centres had an SQA contact and/or an administration team with responsibility for recording and submission of results.

General feedback

In the majority of cases, candidates were involved in planning their assessment and took responsibility for identifying situations they encountered in the workplace where evidence could be generated.

Candidates discussed the relevance of Core Skills and how they could be useful in everyday situations. This helped to make the subject more engaging and relevant.

Assessors worked with learners to ensure that the level and quantity of evidence was appropriate.

In all cases, candidates had ready access to assessments and were in regular contact with the assessor.

Areas of good practice

All reports commented on the effective organisation of the centres and on the clarity and quality of the documentation.

Centre master files contained information relating to the policies and procedures of the company. Most centres had an SQA master folder containing teaching materials, assessments and reassessments, candidate registrations, internal verifications documentation and candidate feedback forms. A number of centres had developed online folders and e-portfolios.

There was good evidence of planning between the assessor and candidate on how assessment evidence could be obtained. The candidates identified suitable activities from their workplace. This was a good example of learner engagement and was further developed in the review and feedback stages.

An increasing number of centres integrated assessments.

Regular meetings were held to discuss standardisation and Evidence Requirements, and to provide a forum for the dissemination of good practice.

In the majority of centres, internal verification supported the assessment process, and in conjunction with regular curriculum group meetings, ensured that standardisation was regularly reviewed and considered by all assessors.

In a number of centres the assessment of Numeracy and ICT had been effectively linked.

There was evidence of the use of technology, eg Dropbox and video clips to support the assessment process.

Specific areas for improvement

Centres should continue to use evidence generated from activities and assessments in the main award to cover the Numeracy assessments. This will allow candidates to cover Core Skills assessments as part of their normal activities and will ensure that the relevance of Numeracy in the main award is highlighted and understood.

Centres should also consider opportunities to further integrate Core Skills assessment.